



***United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York***

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**16 HONORED WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DIRECTOR AWARDS**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that 14 attorneys and 2 paralegal specialists in the Southern District of New York were honored today with the Attorney General's "Director Award" in Washington, D.C. The award is given annually by the Department of Justice for outstanding work in a particular case. This year, 6 cases received attention. A summary is listed below:

**POSTAL ANTHRAX**

Assistant United States Attorney SHEILA M. GOWAN is receiving an award for her work in defending a preliminary injunction seeking to close the United States Postal Service Morgan Facility in New York City after traces of anthrax were discovered there in the fall of 2001. After a GOWAN defended the Postal Service against a lawsuit seeking to close the Morgan Facility, GOWAN helped advise and coordinate compliance with a District Court order to conduct testing on facilities adjacent to the Morgan Facility.

## **FLU LITIGATION**

KATHY ZEBROWSKI has been Chief of the Financial Litigation Unit (the “FLU”) since 1990 and is responsible for civil and criminal collection cases, bail forfeiture cases, and defensive foreclosure cases. Under her leadership, the SDNY’s collections continue to increase annually. Most recently, ZEBROWSKI, together with the Probation Department, has established weekly case reviews of outstanding criminal fines/restitutions.

## **BLOODS VIOLENT GANG**

This successful investigation and prosecution of the founder and leaders of the United Blood Nation (the “UBN”), one of the country’s largest and most violent gangs, commonly known as the Bloods, resulted in a multi-defendant federal RICO prosecution, as well as other related federal and state prosecutions, and ended with the conviction of the Bloods’ founder and top lieutenants and the solving of hundreds of crimes committed in multiple states. This prosecution completely razed the top echelon of the Bloods. Assistant United States Attorneys DANIEL M. GITNER, RONNIE ABRAMS, ELIZABETH F. MARINGER, and Paralegal Specialist GABRIELLE BRENNAN are being cited for their work on this case.

## **KJ PROGRAM FRAUD**

Assistant United States Attorneys MARIA BARTON, MARGERY FEINZIG, CATHY SEIBEL, CYNTHIA KEEFE DUNNE, and Paralegal Specialist SUSAN GIORDANO

are being honored for their work in the RICO prosecution of 14 defendants, accused of engaging in a variety of fraud schemes. The lead defendant, MORDECHAI SAMET, was sentenced to over 27 years in prison.

### **RESTREPO VIOLENT GANG**

Assistant United States Attorneys RONNIE ABRAMS, MARC MUKASEY and HELEN CANTWELL were cited for helping to convict 12 members of the Restrepo Organization, a violent robbery crew led by ALEX RESTREPO. The Restrepo Organization was responsible for approximately 100 armed robberies, and the murder of Donald Pagani, Sr, a retired NYPD Detective in 1999.

### **BRUNETTI INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS**

Assistant United States Attorneys JOSHUA LEVINE and ROBERTO FINZI received this award after a year-long investigation that led to the conviction of 20 defendants, including GINO BRUNETTI, a Mexican based Columbian National once described as the “principal supplier of South American drugs in the United States,” by the Mexican Attorney General. BRUNETTI is now serving two life terms in prison.

Each of the award winners were honored during ceremonies on November 14, 2003 in Washington, D.C.

Mr. COMEY congratulated each of the recipients: “I’m so proud of each person being honored today. They are dedicated public servants who come to work every day with one goal in mind, doing the right thing. Through their work, they make this office better, and our nation safer,” he said.

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